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ABSTRACT

California educational legislation enacted in July 1990, ended state issuance of community college credentials. Faculty in the state's community colleges now assume significant responsibility for evaluating the qualifications of prospective teaching personnel. Within the next 10 years, 50% of current community college faculty will retire and growth will create the need for more teachers. In order to select the most qualified faculty, the following qualities of effective faculty should be considered: (1) discipline preparation, including knowledge of the contributions of women and ethnic minorities, the ability to use a variety of teaching methodologies to respond to different student learning styles, the ability of faculty providing professional support services to provide them in ways sensitive to a diverse student body, and a commitment to maintain discipline currency; (2) communication and other interpersonal skills that meet the needs of a culturally diverse faculty and student body; (3) sensitivity to, and knowledge of, a diverse student body and its needs, demonstrated by such activities as the completion of multi-cultural coursework or study abroad; (4) creativity and innovation; (5) leadership potential, including an understanding of shared governance and the community college curriculum; (6) service in the community; and (7) sensitivity to the role of faculty in fostering a democratic society. Specific suggestions for the faculty hiring committee for each quality are included. (PAA)

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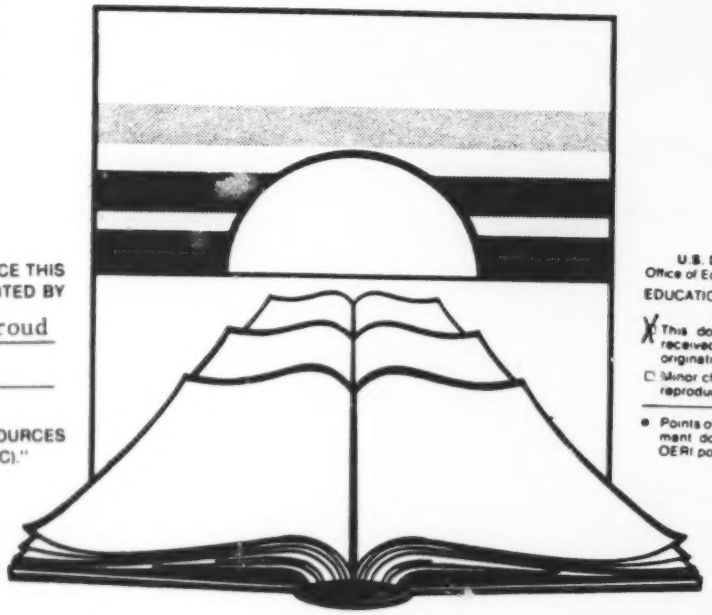
HIRING EFFECTIVE FACULTY: AN INTRODUCTION



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THE ACADEMIC SENATE FOR CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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HIRING EFFECTIVE FACULTY: AN INTRODUCTION

ABSTRACT: Community College faculty now assume significant responsibility for evaluating the qualifications of individuals who seek employment as faculty in community colleges. This paper, developed by the Educational Policies Committee of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges identifies and discusses the following qualities of effective faculty: (1) Discipline preparation and the ability to teach or provide professional support services and to maintain discipline currency, including an understanding of contributions of ethnic minorities, women and global cultures to the discipline; (2) Communication and other interpersonal skills; (3) Sensitivity to, and knowledge of, a diverse student body and its needs; an appreciation of different student learning styles; (4) Creativity and innovation; (5) Leadership potential, including and understanding of shared governance and community college curriculum; (6) Service in the community; (7) Sensitivity to the role teachers play in fostering a democratic society.

MEMBERS OF THE EDUCATIONAL POLICIES COMMITTEE:
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Saeed Ali, Glendale College and Chancellor's Office
Michael Anker, Contra Costa College
Sally Flotho, Golden West College
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HIRING EFFECTIVE FACULTY: AN INTRODUCTION[1]

INTRODUCTION

AB 1725 ended the state issuance of community college credentials on July 1, 1990. Community college faculty now assume significant responsibility for evaluating the qualifications of individuals who seek employment as faculty in community colleges. Effective faculty members are the core of an excellent college. Therefore it is in the best interest of the college, its students, and its community to hire the best qualified and, hence, the most effective faculty to teach, counsel, and provide professional library and support services. In order to select effective faculty we should identify the qualities of effective faculty. Attention to the potential of an applicant needs to be given appropriate consideration.

Effective faculty demonstrate the following qualities:

1. Discipline preparation that includes: (a) knowledge of the contributions of women and ethnic minorities as well as the global contributions to the discipline; (b) the ability to teach using a variety of teaching methodologies that satisfy the requirements of different student learning styles; in the case of counselors, librarians and others who provide professional support services, the ability to provide these services with techniques and methodologies that are sensitive to a diverse student body; (c) the commitment to maintain discipline currency
2. Communication and other interpersonal skills that meet the needs of a culturally diverse faculty and student body
3. Sensitivity to, and knowledge of, a diverse student body and its needs
4. Creativity and innovation
5. Leadership potential including an understanding of shared governance and the community college curriculum
6. Service in the community
7. Sensitivity to the role faculty play in fostering a democratic society

Community colleges cannot rely on applicants to appear; they must actively seek applicants in order to build a diversified pool. A major task facing the California community colleges is to recruit individuals with the qualities identified above. New colleagues must be hired to replace the 50% of the current faculty who will retire in the next ten years. Additional faculty will be needed

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[1] It is understood that the specific characteristics of faculty discussed in this paper are neither necessary nor sufficient conditions of ethnic sensitivity, per se. A prospective faculty member should not be limited to demonstrating sensitivity or concern or potential exclusively in these ways, but rather encouraged to demonstrate these qualities with whatever evidence they choose. The examples developed in this paper are intended to broaden the factors which may legitimately be taken into account in hiring new faculty and to suggest to hiring committees the types of experiences they should encourage candidates to bring forward in support of their candidacy.

because of projected growth in the next fifteen years. (Five-hundred-thousand additional students are expected to enroll in our colleges). In the future, the student body will be more ethnically diverse. By the year 2005, no single ethnic group will represent a majority of the population of California.

Faculty of the colleges of today face the challenge of selecting the faculty of the colleges of tomorrow. The student body of

tomorrow's college will differ in background and preparation not only from the current faculty, but also from each other. Although these students may come from diverse backgrounds, they are nonetheless alike; they have the same expectations of community colleges and their faculties as their predecessors. (See *"Ramifications and Implications of Affirmative Action on Hiring,"* adopted by the Academic Senate November, 1990.)

QUALITIES OF EFFECTIVE FACULTY

Discipline Preparation: Faculty members must possess extensive knowledge of their discipline including the contributions of women and ethnic minorities, as well as global contributions to their discipline. The faculty hiring committee must ensure the excellence of this preparation. More importantly, potential faculty should demonstrate the ability to use their professional and interpersonal skills to teach this discipline-specific knowledge to students, using a variety of teaching methodologies that satisfy the requirements of different student learning styles. Those providing professional support services (counselors, librarians and others) must also be sensitive to the needs of diverse students, using appropriate methods and approaches to meet these needs. An effective faculty should also show a commitment to maintain currency in his/her discipline by attending conference, joining professional organizations, in depth study, and in other related ways. While the Education Code (section 87356) defines the minimum qualifications, the hiring faculty may broaden the qualifications for hire. Such a broadening can only enhance the hiring process resulting in a more effective faculty. However, local qualifications should never be discriminatory nor erect a barrier to diversity.

Communication and Other Interpersonal Skills: Effective faculty must be able to explain ideas clearly to students in ways that students can understand. Effective faculty respect students' varying styles of communication. Effective faculty are articulate and help students learn to express themselves clearly. This skill implies that the faculty have a working knowledge of a variety of communication styles that are effective with various student populations.

Effective faculty may themselves have stylistic differences in communicating. Hiring committees should acknowledge that regional and second language accents may not be, in and of themselves, barriers to teacher's effective communication abilities.

Interpersonal skills go beyond the ability to communicate effectively. They encompass respect for the individual, regardless of differences in opinion and background, and are demonstrated in each contact between faculty member and student. Good interpersonal skills enable the faculty member to relate to the student and help students learn to relate to one another. They help the faculty member create an environment conducive to learning.

Sensitivity to, and Knowledge of, a Diverse Student Body: According to AB 1725 (87360a) the applicant must demonstrate "a sensitivity to and an understanding of the diverse academic, socioeconomic, cultural, disability, and ethnic backgrounds of community college students." The job announcement should reflect and communicate this concern and the district's hiring policy should emphasize these criteria in the paper screening and interviewing process. In order to ascertain whether job candidates meet these criteria, a hiring committee could look for such elements as:

a. demonstrated successful history of involvement in communities or colleges with diverse populations
b. successful completion of any of these kinds of courses: classes dealing with disabilities, multi-cultural studies, the sociology of different socioeconomic groups, methods or theories dealing with differences among learning and teaching and counseling styles, and other relevant course work
c. involvement in activities focusing on diverse populations
d. study or travel abroad
e. membership in organizations which promote understanding of other groups or that have an international focus
f. sensitivity to, and knowledge of, diverse students, as demonstrated in a classroom, counseling, library or other support services setting
g. materials or publications prepared by the candidate which manifest such knowledge and/or sensitivity
h. other

It is expected that a substantial portion of the new faculty hired in the coming decades will come from diverse backgrounds bringing with them alternative perspectives to enrich campus life and foster the understanding which this section addresses. (The statewide goal of the California Community Colleges is that 30% of all new hires by 1992-93 be from ethnic minority backgrounds.) Additionally, these faculty can model for their students a positive future as community college teachers, counselors, librarians, and support staff.

Creativity and Innovation: In the past, community colleges have placed a premium on previous experience. This emphasis on experience needs to be examined. Rewarding experience by itself is akin to rewarding seat time in the classroom without evaluating the quality of student work. The quality of the experience as well as the length of experience must be ascertained through such means as checking references and making

sure the assessment was based on observation. Experience would then have real meaning as an indicator of creativity and innovation.

Talented newcomers who have not had the opportunity to become experienced must not be overlooked. To do so may shortchange the institution. Measuring creativity and innovation in prospective faculty members is a challenge. In order to ensure that the most creative and innovative faculty are hired, selection committees must objectively assess potential for and experience in demonstrating creativity and innovation. Evidence of innovation should be included in the job announcement as an expected qualification. The application and interview process could be designed so that a candidate might show creativity through any one or any combination of the following:

a. situational questions
b. role playing
c. teaching demonstrations, mock counseling sessions, or simulated work activities for librarians or other support staff
d. student response to the above simulations
e. materials or demonstrations prepared by the candidate that show creativity and innovation
f. other

Leadership Potential: Faculty have assumed greater leadership in this era of educational reform. Faculty and administration now jointly develop policies that formerly were the exclusive province of administration. Policies in hiring, tenure, and evaluation must be redesigned, implemented, monitored, and amended as needed. Faculty must be recruited and hired not only to perform their traditional duties but also to provide leadership in these new joint-governance roles. In evaluating a candidate's overall competence for a faculty position, the hiring committee should broaden its deliberations to include an assessment of leadership potential, including an understanding of shared governance and the community college curriculum. The committee could, for example, consider any one or any combination of the following:

a. experience in roles of responsibility in professional organizations and activities related to the candidate's discipline
b. leadership experience in areas outside the candidate's discipline (in other faculty work, in student activities as a student, in classified positions, in volunteer or community work)
c. potential for leadership, as well as actual leadership activities, as evidenced in references or reference-checking
d. information supplied by the candidate on the resume or other application documents related to leadership experience, as well as potential for leadership
e. fostering leadership among students
f. other

Service in the Community: A growing trend in higher education is

to encourage both students and faculty to share the benefits of their educations with their communities in the form of community service. They provide instruction, library services, and counseling, and other support services in an atmosphere welcoming to students, accepting of cultural diversity, and conducive to learning. They mentor students to succeed in their community college goals, whether those goals involve transfer to a four-year school, completion of a vocational course of study, or enrollment in classes to supplement their general knowledge or on-the-job skills.

At the same time as effective faculty prepare students to achieve these goals, they instill a sense of civic responsibility and pride by modeling such behavior. Effective faculty respond to community needs by anticipating employment trends, by modifying courses and programs, and by offering cohesive programs of study.

Effective faculty act as the best public relations staff for the community college. They are the most direct link between the community and the community college.

Job announcements should acknowledge service in the community by requiring some proof of experience or potential in this area. A hiring committee could consider the following:

a. demonstrated involvement in community organizations that emphasize civic responsibility in particular outside of their ethnic/cultural group
b. successful completion of an internship or practicum in college or community service or course work in community organizing and service
c. demonstrated experience in designing innovative and multicultural and/or international courses or programs to serve community needs
d. involvement in faculty governance or in student governance
e. promoting the involvement of ethnic minority students and faculty into governance
f. experience in the Peace Corps, Teacher Corps, or other such volunteer activities
g. other

<u>Awareness of the Role Faculty Play in Fostering a Democratic Society:</u> Our country and the world depend on a broadly educated populace able to think critically about the issues facing the planet. For that education to be effective, faculty must model democratic principles in what they assign and use, such as in selecting books, speakers, films and other materials. Faculty should reflect our democratic philosophy. A hiring committee could consider evidence of the following:

a. knowledge of history and politics, namely the constitution and its guarantees as it relates to dominant American culture as well as culturally diverse populations and disenfranchised and/or underrepresented groups
b. participation in local, state, or national political activities

c. awareness of how one's discipline influences and is influenced by the entire world, not only by Europe
d. other

SUGGESTIONS FOR CARRYING OUT THESE PROPOSALS

To ensure that the current faculty is capable of assuming the responsibility of hiring effective new faculty, special training should be provided to those involved in every phase of the employment process. Staff diversity and staff development funding from AB 1725 could be used for workshops to teach faculty how to assume their new responsibilities in hiring diverse faculty. Training should include: understanding affirmative action and non-discrimination requirements, reframing our traditional Eurocentric model of excellence to a multicultural model of excellence; applying minimum qualifications and the equivalency process; using effective multicultural paper screening; using appropriate multicultural interviewing techniques; identifying and assessing the qualities and criteria outlined in this paper.

Faculty should also learn how to develop hiring policies and procedures, including: preparing advertising copy, writing job announcements, and designing application forms which are specific and elicit the information required to make the best hiring decision.

CONCLUSION

With the increased responsibility of faculty in the hiring process, it is essential that we remain aware of how the qualities of an effective faculty member have changed to include a multicultural and gender perspective. Our hiring process must facilitate access to pertinent information on the candidates' academic preparation, communication and other interpersonal skills, sensitivity to, and knowledge of, a diverse student body, creativity and innovation, potential for leadership both as faculty and with students, service in the community and sensitivity to the role of fostering a democratic society. In addition, faculty must be well informed and trained to participate in the hiring process. Only then can faculty assume the responsibility of selecting effective new faculty members who can best serve our increasingly diverse students' needs.

Related Academic Senate documents:

1. *"Ramifications and Implications of Affirmative Action on Hiring"* adopted November, 1990
2. *"Contract Faculty Hiring Procedures: A Model Based on Assembly Bill 1725"* adopted November, 1989
3. *"Part-time Faculty Hiring Procedures: A Model Based on Assembly Bill 1725"* adopted November, 1989
4. *"Ramifications and Implications of Affirmative Action on Hiring Part-time (Non-contract) Faculty"* proposed Fall, 1991
5. *"Accreditation: Evaluating the Collective Faculty"* adopted Spring, 1990